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ABSTRACT

This document comprises the third annual Wyoming Education Progress Report, which measures the state's progress toward achieving the six National Education Goals by the year 2000. Three years of data indicate that parents, educators, and students are responding to the national and local education goals, and that more Wyoming students are preparing for college work. However, the number of single-parent births is above the national average, the violent death rate among teenagers remains high, many students lack basic skills in reading and mathematics, and there is a lack of indicators for education, health, and family service systems. Each section of the document reports on Wyoming's progress toward meeting a specific National Education Goal and describes state objectives and actions. The state receives satisfactory ratings for the first five Goals. A list of Wyoming education goals and checklist of citizen actions are included. It is suggested that new goals, complementary to the national goals, be developed in the following areas: parental involvement, support of teachers and leaders, time and space allocation, technology, relevant course content, multiculturalism, business partnerships, comprehensive health programs, cooperation, and discipline and safety. (LMI)

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ED 380 904

WYOMING'S 2000 EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORT

1993

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EA 026 617

Wyoming's Education Progress Report ~ 1993 was a culmination of efforts between Wyoming state government agencies. Primary individuals who assisted with these efforts are . . .

Scott Farris, Governor's Office
Jim Lendino, Department of Education
Ann Carroll, Department of Administration & Information ~ Computer Technology Division

INTRODUCTION . . .

This is the third annual Wyoming Education Progress Report, measuring Wyoming's progress toward achieving the six National Education Goals by the Year 2000.

In this third report, we find signs that are encouraging and show that Wyoming educators, students and parents are responding to the challenge of the National Education Goals, as well as the goals of local districts, neighborhood schools, individual families and post secondary education institutions.

The trends provided by three years of data indicate that more Wyoming students are taking the recommended, appropriate courses to prepare for college-level work. More Wyoming high-school students than ever are taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams to earn college credit.

There is even some evidence to suggest Wyoming teenagers are abstaining from sexual intercourse in larger numbers, and those who engage in sexual intercourse are more aware of the need to use birth control.

All is not good news, however.

Wyoming is still above the national average in births to single teen parents, and has a higher violent-death rate for teenagers.

And even though Wyoming students perform better than their peers nationally on standardized tests, far, far too many still lack basic skills in reading, mathematics and other subjects.

Once again, we are concerned about the lack of consistent indicators regarding our education, health and family service systems. It is difficult to know where we are going when we aren't entirely sure where we are. This report does contain more data than the previous two, and we will let those figures do most of the talking this year. We have noted where Wyoming is headed in the right direction, where we are headed in the wrong direction and where we seem stuck.

To refresh everyone's memory here are the six National Education Goals:

(1) By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

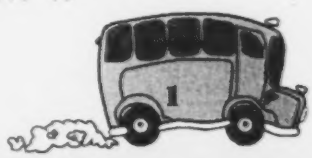
(2) By the year 2000, the high-school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

(3) By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, history and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning and productive employment in our modern economy.

(4) By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

(5) By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

(6) By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.



General Statistics . . .[1]

Percent of Wyoming's population that is school age (5-17) . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
22.2 percent	22.2 percent	21.3 percent	18.2 percent

Wyoming public school enrollment . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
100,313 (Fall 92)	99,734	98,210	42,661,294

Average daily attendance . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
94,264	93,750	91,277	39,463,871

Wyoming state and local government expenditures on all education as a percentage of all government expenditures . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
36 percent	36.3 percent	NA	34.1 percent

Wyoming expenditures per average daily attendance . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
$5,866	$5,333	$5,255	$5,417

Wyoming pupil/teacher ratio . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
15.2	15.6	14.8	17.3

Wyoming students per microcomputer . . .

No new data available. (1991 Report: between 14.5 and 22).

Wyoming average public school classroom teacher salary . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
$30,425	$29,208	$28,988	$34,054

Number of Wyoming high-school graduates . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
6,050 (Spring 93)	5,808	5,741	2,257,738

Length of Wyoming school year . . . 180 days

Length of school year in Japan . . . 240 days[2]

Reader's Note . . . When the letters NA appear in the data tables it means the data under that category is either not available, not applicable or was simply not used in previous Wyoming Education Progress reports. Readers should also note that the years listed in the data tables (1991, 1992, 1993) are the year of the report and reflect the data for the latest year available.

GOAL 1 . . .

ALL CHILDREN WILL START SCHOOL READY TO LEARN

It is fitting that Goal No. 1 is the goal that, more than any other, speaks to every child's first (and most important) teacher: the parents. Without the love and support of their parents, children start school with a great handicap -- not just that first day of school, but every day of school.

Coming to school ready to learn means so many things. It means appropriate prenatal and health care throughout a child's life. It means providing children with nutritious meals, filling a home with books and learning materials, putting limits on inappropriate behavior, ensuring homework is completed and stressing the importance of education.

More than anything, it means setting a good example. A parent who never reads cannot expect their children to open a book for the joy of reading. A parent who abuses substances cannot expect their child to abstain. A parent who shows no interest in their child's schoolwork cannot expect the child to be open and enthusiastic to learning. Children go in the direction their parents walk, not in the direction their parents point.

Objective 1: All disadvantaged and disabled children will have access to high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school.

(1)[3] **Percentage of Wyoming children living in poverty . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
13 percent	14.1 percent	NA	19.8 percent

Median income of Wyoming families with children . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
$35,154	$36,320	$37,265	$32,772

(2)[4] **Number of Wyoming children served by the Head Start program . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
1,282*	1,128	NA	NA

**This figure represents less than half the number of Wyoming children who are eligible for Head Start.*

WHAT WYOMING IS DOING . . .

Early childhood education services are provided by many different sources. The majority of services available are private preschool or day-care settings that are regulated by the state to ensure children are receiving appropriate care. The Head Start programs are available in various areas of the state, and many local school districts are beginning to provide before and after school child care through a variety of funding sources.

Currently, state law prohibits school districts from providing educational services to children who are preschool age, unless they are disabled. Many school districts become involved in early education by collaborating with community early education pro-

viders in various projects. These programs consist of a variety of components such as before and after school child care, family support and guidance through home visits to parents of children birth through age 3, support and training to family day-care providers in the community and school-based information and referral services to help parents with other child-care needs.

For children experiencing developmental delays or disabilities between the ages of birth through 5, state and federal law requires that Wyoming provide early intervention and special education. Wyoming is divided into 14-service regions based on geography, population and service needs. These 14 regional programs provide a statewide network of infant education and developmental preschool services. Screening and assessment services are offered to any Wyoming family at no cost.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Education, 777-7417

Objective 2: Every parent in America will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day to helping his or her preschool child learn; parents will have access to the training and support they need.

(1)[5] **Percentage of Wyoming children in single-parent families . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
16.7 percent	16.4 percent	NA	24.7 percent

(2)[6] **Percentage of Wyoming eighth-grade students who are absent from school three days or more per month . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
21 percent	23 percent	NA	23 percent

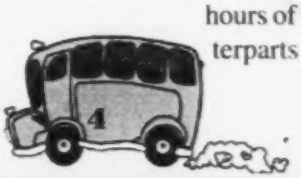
Percentage of Wyoming eighth-grade students who report having three or more reading materials in their homes . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
83 percent	86 percent	NA	77 percent

Percentage of Wyoming eighth-grade students who report watching television six or more hours per day . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
8 percent	7 percent	NA	13 percent

In last year's report, we noted a number of interesting facts gleaned from the previous year's National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) involving the mathematics ability of Wyoming eighth graders. We learned, for example, that some two-thirds of Wyoming eighth-graders do at least one hour of homework each day, that nearly half read more than 10 pages of material per day and that Wyoming children watch fewer hours of television then their counterparts around the nation.



States with similar figures also had composite test scores that ranked at the top of the nation, indicating a direct correlation between homework and home support and classroom performance. This year's NAEP tests were expanded to include fourth-grade students and had different questions of students, making a direct comparison with last year's results difficult, but here are a few interesting tidbits taken from this year's report . . .

- **62 percent of Wyoming fourth-grade students say they talk with friends and family about reading at least once a week, but 23 percent said they never or hardly ever do so.**

- **49 percent of Wyoming fourth-grade students say they read for fun almost every day, but 12 percent say they never or hardly ever read for fun.**

- **Far more fourth-grade girls than boys (57 percent to 41 percent) report reading for fund almost every day, while twice as many boys as girls (16 percent to 8 percent) report they never or hardly ever read for fun.**

- **Native American and Hispanic children generally report reading less for fun than their white counterparts, as do the children of parents who are not high-school graduates.**

- **47 percent of Wyoming fourth-grade students report they watch two hours or less of television per day, but 14 percent watch an astonishing six hours or more of television per day -- compared to 21 percent nationally.**

What Wyoming is doing . . .

"Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T (Promoting Awareness through Resources, Education, Networking and Training)" provides training and assistance to those who educate and care for children, including parents. P.A.R.E.N.T.'s focus is on children birth through 8-years- of-age, and serves as a clearinghouse for videos, books and other information for child-care providers, and provides detailed assistance in a variety of areas, including workshops and seminars. P.A.R.E.N.T., through a grant from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, will also develop a database on the status of young children in Wyoming and publish newsletters and service directories for use by parents and other child-care providers.

Contact . . . Wyoming P.A.R.E.N.T., 1-800-400-3999.

Objective 3: Children will receive the nutrition and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies; and the number of low-birthweight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.

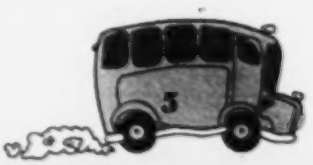
(1)[7] **Incidence of low birthweight among Wyoming babies . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National*
7.0 percent	7.4 percent	7.0 percent	5.8 percent

**National figures represent only the white population.*

Percentage of pregnant Wyoming women who received prenatal care during the first trimester of their pregnancy . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
79.2 percent	79.4 percent	78.4 percent	NA



Percentage of pregnant women nationally who received prenatal care during the first trimester of their pregnancy . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
76.0 percent	76.0 percent	76.4 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming children in day care centers not properly immunized against infectious diseases . . .*

1993	1992	1991	National
9.7 percent	6.7 percent	7.2 percent	NA

**Fully immunized would include vaccinations for measles, mumps, rubella, diptheria, tetanus, pertusis (shooping cough), influenza and polio.*

Percentage of Wyoming school children not properly immunized against infectious diseases . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
1.5 percent	1.4 percent	2.5 percent	NA

Incidence of infant mortality per 1,000 births . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
7.8*	8.6	NA	8.9

**The rate of infant mortality has declined steadily in Wyoming over the past five years from a 1986 rate of 10.9 per 1,000 births to the 1991 rate cited here.*

Percentage of eligible citizens participating in the Wyoming Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
66 percent	60 percent	NA	NA

(2)[8] **Percent of Wyoming children without health insurance . . .***

1993	1992	1991	National
10.6 percent	15.1 percent	NA	14.0 percent

**The statistic for this 1993 report is the average of 1988-1992 data, while the statistic used in the 1992 report was the average of 1987-1991 data.*

(3)[9] **Percentage of Wyoming high-school girls who think they are overweight . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
44.6 percent	NA	42.6 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school girls who are trying to lose weight . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
59 percent	NA	62.5 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school boys who think they are overweight . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
20.8 percent	NA	20.6 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school boys who are trying to lose weight . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
35.2 percent	NA	21.8 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who ate fruit the day before the survey . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
59.9 percent	NA	54.6 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who ate a cooked vegetable the day before the survey . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
46.9 percent	NA	48.2 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who ate green salad the day before the survey . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
28.7 percent	NA	32.8 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who ate french fries or potato chips the day before the survey . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
54.1 percent	NA	57.4 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who ate cookies, doughnuts, pies or cake the day before the survey . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
56.7 percent	NA	59.7 percent	NA

What Wyoming is doing . . .

"Best Beginnings for Wyoming Babies" is a public/private partnership initiated by the Division of Public Health to provide a system of prenatal care for all Wyoming mothers and infants. This statewide program is to assure that all pregnant women have access to early prenatal care as well as any other service they might need in order to have a healthy child. The program also provides assistance for infants to receive well-child care and immunizations during the first year of life.

"Healthy Start" is a tracking program for "at-risk" infants and toddlers. This is a cooperative effort between the public and private sector and involves enrollment of infants and toddlers who are at risk for development delays because of medical, social or environmental problems. The tracking system follows these children from birth through 3-years-of-age with intervention an integral part of the program. Healthy Start is now available in Albany, Campbell, Carbon, Crook, Fremont, Johnson, Laramie, Lincoln, Natrona, Sheridan, Sweetwater, Teton, Uinta and Weston counties as well as Fort Washakie.

"Presumptive Eligibility" is a method of expanding medical coverage for pregnant women and children up to age six who are likely to qualify for Medicaid. Early access to prenatal care has proved to contribute to better birth outcomes. Presumptive Eligibility allows qualified medical providers to make an initial eligibility determination, so pregnant women can obtain prenatal care immediately without any delay during the

period in which a formal determination is being made. This single page application also acts as a financial application for the Children with Special Health Care Needs program and as a referral form for the WIC program.

"Smart Card" is a re-inventing government electronic solution to deliver government services and improve the quality and access of health care. As a system solution, Wyoming is expanding its use of smart cards to apply to 5,000 Women's Infants and Children (WIC) participants and 2,100 Food Stamp households. Through the Western Governors' Association, the feasibility study and system design is also currently being completed to add maternal and child health, Head Start and Medicaid services to the card.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Health, 777-6186

RIGHT DIRECTION . . . WRONG DIRECTION . . . JUST OKAY?

Available data for Goal #1 does not indicate a solid trend of improvement in enough areas to merit a thumbs-up that signifies we are heading in the right direction. Nor is there data to suggest we are heading resolutely in the wrong direction. This should not be surprising in regard to Goal #1. Of all the goals, this is the one that will reflect long-term trends in the values held by a society and in how families live on a daily basis and not radical short-term changes.

No government program can flip a switch to change attitudes, im-prove parent skills or reverse health trends overnight. With the proper resources and a consistent message of personal responsibility, such changes can occur. This has been demonstrated by increased public awareness of the problems associated with drinking and driving or smoking and the decline in those activities. But, those trends took time and it will be several more years before we know that more children are receiving proper health care and the proper beginnings at home.

In the short term, we have a mixed bag. We can be pleased that there are early signs that fewer children live in poverty, but the median incomes for families with children continues to drop -- perhaps due to a slight increase in the number of single-parent homes.

The incidence of low birthweight seems unchanged in Wyoming over the past few years, but we continue to see substantial declines in infant mortality. Yet, we should be troubled that more parents are not ensuring their children are properly immunized against diseases that are making a comeback after being seemingly eradicated.

Student health trends are also mixed, although the surveys are not the best vehicle to make short-term comparisons. Still, there is little doubt students consume as many fats and sweets as fruits and vegetables, and we must be very concerned about the number of children who watch so much television and read so few books.

GOAL 2 . . .

THE HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE WILL INCREASE TO AT LEAST 90 PERCENT

The goal of having a high-school graduation rate of 90 percent by the year 2000 is modest enough in Wyoming. While we struggle with how to accurately define our graduation rate, it is highly probable from the information available that Wyoming is at or near that rate today. Past reports have put the figure at 88 percent.

Even so, our relatively low dropout rate still means hundreds of Wyoming teenagers leave school each year without the skills needed to secure meaningful employment. There are various and complex reasons why students drop out, but studies show dropping out is seldom a snap decision. Instead, it is part of a process and an attitude about school that may begin quite early in life

The U.S. Department of Education notes dropout rates are higher among children from poorer families, single-parent families, families where a parent or older sibling has previously dropped out and non-English family backgrounds.

Dropping out is not an irrevocable action. Data presented more fully under Goal #5 on adult literacy indicates many who dropout go on to earn a GED or other high-school diploma equivalents.

Despite this good news, we should keep in mind one final sobering thought: A high-school diploma no longer is the threshold for a secure living. Good-paying jobs today generally require post-secondary education of some type whether at a university, community college or technical school. To remain competitive in the job market, a return to school will probably be needed at many times throughout each of our lives. To simply graduate from high school is, as stated above, a modest goal.

Objective 1: The nation must dramatically reduce its dropout rate, and 75 percent of those students who dropout will successfully complete a high-school degree or its equivalent.

(1) **Wyoming drop-out rate . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
3.59 percent	3.4 percent	3.4 percent	NA

The drop-out rate is computed through a formula that counts the number of students in grades 7-12 one year, then comparing the number of students in grades 8-12 the next year plus the number of high-school graduates. No accepted formula is currently in use to compute a graduation rate, although past estimates have put this figure at around 88 percent in Wyoming.

(2) **Percentage of Wyoming teenagers who are not in school or in the work force . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
3.3 percent	NA	NA	5.0 percent

(3)[11] **Number of Wyoming teenage girls per thousand who gave birth . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
47.6	56.6	50	41 **(1987 data)**

The above figure means that 877 teenage girls (age 15-19) gave birth in 1992, while seven girls under the age of 15 gave birth in 1992. Just under 8 percent of all births in Wyoming are to single teenage girls.

(3)[12] **Percentage of all Wyoming high-school students who report they have had sexual intercourse . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
49.7 percent	NA	52.9 percent	NA

Of those students who reported having engaged in sexual intercourse, the percentage who said they had had intercourse with more than one partner in the three months preceding the survey . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
66.8 percent	NA	34.2 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming 12th-grade students who say they have had sexual intercourse . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
66.9 percent	NA	70.7 percent	NA

Percentage of 12th-grade Wyoming girls who reported they have been pregnant . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
7.2 percent	NA	12.9 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who reported they used a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
51 percent	NA	42 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who reported they used no birth control the last time they had sexual intercourse . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
17.6 percent	NA	21 percent	NA

Percentage of Wyoming high-school students who reported they used no birth control the last time they had sexual intercourse, weren't sure they were using birth control or used the ineffective withdrawal method of birth control . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
32.4 percent	NA	38 percent	NA

Objective 2: The gap in high-school graduation rates between American students from minority backgrounds and their non-minority counterparts will be eliminated.

No indicators available.

WHAT WYOMING IS DOING . . .

While each school district has developed its own plan for intervening with children at risk of dropping out, about a half-dozen districts have created **alternative high schools**. These schools are primarily designed for non-traditional students – such as young mothers, older students who dropped out and are back in school and those with other problems who can be in a school where they feel comfortable and can pursue their studies.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Education, 777-7675

The Governor's Teen Pregnancy Task Force develops policy recommendations and programs aimed at reducing the number of unwanted teen pregnancies in Wyoming. The task force has developed programs to provide teenagers who have given birth with family planning counseling to prevent subsequent unwanted births, to help teenagers and parents learn to communicate with each other and diagnostic conferences to help communities develop local plans to reduce the teen pregnancy rate.

Contact . . . Governor's Teen Pregnancy Task Force, 265-1523

The Wyoming HIV Education School Health Project is a federally-funded program through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Wyoming Department of Education. The project collects data on youth behavior and existing health education and other school health programs. It has developed a model curriculum which school districts may voluntarily implement and provides training for educators regarding the recommended curriculum.

Contact . . . Wyoming HIV Edcuation School Health Project, 686-0317

A variety of state agencies and private organizations also have programs aimed at encouraging students to stay in school and helping them prepare for a rewarding career. One example is the Wyoming National Guard's **"Go For It!"** program, which counsels high-school students on which classes to take to prepare for future careers, how to prepare a resume and how to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Contact . . . Wyoming Military Department, 772-6201

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports was formed a year ago with the goal of improving the fitness of all Wyoming citizens, but also with the specific goal of ensuring daily physical education was a part of every student's school day. Good health keeps students alert and improves our self-image, by showing that we can set and meet goals -- an idea that has shown into translate to improved classroom performance.

Contact . . . Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, 766-5285

RIGHT DIRECTION . . . WRONG DIRECTION . . . JUST OKAY?

While our dropout rates remain generally unchanged, it is beginning to appear as if we are headed in the right direction in regard to teenage sex. While pregnancy is not an absolute obstacle to completing school, it is certainly a factor in some decisions to leave school. Further, in the age of AIDS, the consequences of sexual activity are far greater.

The growing message of abstinence and personal responsibility seems to be -- and we emphasize seems to be -- having an impact. The live birth rate among

teenage girls is down this year and fewer girls surveyed reported they had been pregnant. The comprehensive health survey of Wyoming teens, when compared to a similar survey conducted two-years ago, indicate more students are choosing to postpone sexual activity until later in life, while more of those who engage in sex report taking precautions to prevent pregnancy or the transmission of disease.

Still, when a single Wyoming high school reports 42 student pregnancies in a single year, we know that the message of abstinence and responsibility must be taught and repeated again and again -- not only in the schools, but at home, in church, through organizations and clubs and, yes, even among peers.

GOAL 3 . . .

AMERICAN STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCY IN ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY: STUDENTS WILL LEARN TO USE THEIR MINDS TO BECOME RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS, LIFELONG LEARNERS AND PRODUCTIVE WORKERS

Children rise -- or descend -- to the expectations set for them. The notion that "all children can learn" has become almost a cliche. It is perhaps more important to suggest that "all children must learn" -- not at the same rate or in the same way, but they all can and must learn nonetheless.

This National Goal sets forth what has been the traditional core areas of study in our schools. This goal is not exclusionary, however. It does not say that these areas of study are to be followed to the exclusion of art, music or other subject areas. What these goals do reflect is that it is important for every person, regardless of vocation, to be able to communicate effectively, to make computations and to understand who we are as a people and how we relate to the world around us.

Wyoming's efforts pre-date the National Goals in this regard. Our accreditation standards adopted four-years ago reflect the need for students to demonstrate what they have learned, to show what they can do. It is not enough just to say that Mary and Johnny took a math class: ***We need to know what Mary and Johnny learned.***

This approach to demonstrable progress as opposed to just earning "seat time" in class raises a number of fascinating issues for educators with the greatest current focus on standards. If we want children to show what they have learned that leads to the obvious question: ***What should they learn -- not just upon graduation, but at every step throughout every grade?*** That debate is occurring at the national level and also at the local level, for Wyoming's accreditation standards say the issue of performance standards is to be set by local districts with community input and not to be mandated by the state.

This approach also raises the issue of flexibility in the teaching of students. If the issue is demonstrable skills, then we need to re-think how we divide children by grades.

> ***Just because a child is 8, does that mean he or she is automatically ready for third grade?***
>
> ***What happens to the child who is good at mathematics, but poor in English?***
>
> ***Isn't interdisciplinary study better than isolating teachers from their colleagues?***

We should continue to move away from a school modeled on the assembly line to a model that more resembles the old one-room schoolhouse where students received more individual attention, subject matter was integrated and children proceeded at their own pace.

Objective 1: The academic performance of elementary and secondary students will increase significantly in every quartile, and the distribution of minority students in each level will more closely reflect the student population as a whole.

(1)[13]**Percentage of Wyoming 11th- and 12th-grade students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses for college credit . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
3.4 percent	2.8 percent	1.9 percent	7.4 percent

Percentage of Wyoming high schools that offer AP courses . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
34 percent	31 percent	NA	48 percent

(2)[14]**Wyoming 1993 American College Testing (ACT) composite score (36 possible) . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
21.2	21.2	21.2	20.7

Number of students taking the ACT who took the college preparatory core curriculum in high school . . .

1993	1992	1991	1990
1,641	1,530	1,403	1,259

It should be noted that those Wyoming students who are taking the college preparatory core curriculum had an average composite score of 22.8 on the 1993 ACT exam -- nearly 8 percent higher than the total median score -- while those students who are taking less than the core curriculum averaged a composite score of 20.0 -- an average of nearly 6 percent lower score than the median.

Objective 2: The percentage of students who demonstrate the ability to reason, solve problems, apply knowledge and write and communicate effectively will increase.

(1)[15]**Percentage of Wyoming fourth-grade students who lack basic reading skills . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
32 percent	NA	NA	43 percent

Percentage of Wyoming fourth-grade students who have reading skills considered proficient or better . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
28 percent	NA	NA	24 percent

For the purposes of the NAEP assessment, basic is defined as being able to understand the overall meaning of what is read and the ability to make obvious connections between the text and the reader's own experiences. To be proficient, the reader adds the ability to understand inferential, as well as literal meanings, and to draw conclusions from what is read.

Objective 3: All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, community service and personal responsibility.

There are no adequate indicators in this category. Anecdotal information would seem to indicate Wyoming youth have a high level of service and civic commitment. Some schools are developing programs that require service as a requisite for graduation. Many students participate in highly-structured service programs, such as the Congressional Awards program, but many also promote service through church and civic groups where records are not kept or compiled.

It is worth noting that Wyoming citizens on the whole seem interested in fulfilling the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Nearly 73 percent of Wyoming citizens eligible to vote are registered to vote, compaired to 67 percent nationally. And of those registered, 85.6 percent voted in the last presidential election, compared to 82.5 percent nationally. Wyoming voting records do not break voter participation into age groups, so the participation level of young voters (age 18-24) cannot be determined.[16]

Objective 4: The percentage of students who are competent in more than one language will substantially increase.

(4)[17]**Percentage of Wyoming 11th- and 12th-grade students taking an AP exam for college credit in a foreign language . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
.14 percent	.05 percent	NA	.77 percent

Objective 5: All students will be knowledgeable about the diverse cultural heritage of this nation and about the world community.

No indicators available.

What Wyoming is doing . . .

The process for implementing Wyoming's new **accreditation standards** is moving forward rapidly. The State Board of Education adopted accreditation standards in 1990 that require the public schools to provide their students with 17 basic core areas of knowledge and skills. Each public school district, with faculty and community input, has developed district goals and mission statements, and gathered baseline data on district and school demographics.

To assist the schools in achieving the desired result for students, the State Department of Education is working with the Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory to develop a state-wide **Frameworks for Student Performance Standards** for public school students in math, science, applied technology/vocational, career options, fine arts, social studies, language arts, humanities, foreign language, health and physical education.

As noted, those students who take the recommended core curriculum to prepare for college academically outperform those who do not. To prepare students for what will be expected of them in higher education, the Wyoming Department of Education, the University of Wyoming (UW) and the community colleges have developed the **"Courses and Choices"** brochure distributed to 9th-grade students so they know what

secondary school curriculum is recommended for college preparatory work. The University and the colleges will continue to provide on-site visits to high schools to further counsel secondary school students on how to prepare for college-level work.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Education, 777-7675

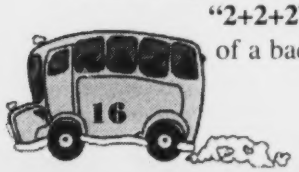
The University of Wyoming has developed admission standards authorized by the 1991 Legislature that will begin applying to incoming students in the fall of 1995. These standards will be based on a combination of appropriate academic high-school preparation and a certain grade point average (GPA) and/or ACT testing scores. Such standards should encourage students to take challenging subject matter in secondary school to prepare for admittance to the University and a successful college experience.

While also geared toward improving post-secondary school performance, the **University Studies** program at UW and now being finalized at the colleges will also help ensure secondary school students know what subject matter will be required at the college level so they can prepare by taking the appropriate courses in secondary school.

Contact . . . University of Wyoming ~ admissions office, 1-800-342-5996

For those students pursuing post-secondary vocational training, Wyoming community colleges have developed with the public schools a study program of recommended courses encompassing the final two years of secondary school and the first two years at a college. This **"2+2"** program offers students the opportunity to train for a particular occupational career, such as areas in applied technology, welding, mechanics and construction.

The College Commission is also developing a **"2+2+2"** program for completion of a bachelor's degree involving recommended courses in the final two years of high school, two years at a community college and two years at the University.



Contact . . . Community College Commission, 777-7763

Fifteen Wyoming school districts encompassing 60 percent of Wyoming school children are now part of the **Wyoming School-University Parntership**, a major effort in the improvement of teacher education in Wyoming. This program links those students aspiring to be teachers with master teachers in the field, and also provides a network for practicing teachers to renew and improve their own skills. Centers for Teaching and Learning are being created at the University and within the districts where professionals can collaborate on developing new teaching techniques and improving existing methods.

Good teachers are essential for good schools, but so are good administrators. **The Task Force on Administrator Education,** formed in 1986, has developed an internship program that will involve collaboration between University faculty, specially-trained mentor principals from Partnership districts and selected internship candidates. The first phase of this program, mentor training and recruitment of internship candidates, will begin this fall.

Contact . . . School-University Partnership, 766-6375

Vast distances between Wyoming communities require that Wyoming aggressively pursue modern telecommunications technologies to provide **distance learning** services to its citizens. The interactive, compressed-video service provided over the Wyoming State Network now links 10 Wyoming communities, allowing for the exchange of video courses for Wyoming citizens/students at sites on the University of Wyoming and the seven colleges plus sites at Gillette and Evanston.

This system, which also can allow for the exchange of data over computer networks, will be expanded in the future to additional sites, including public school sites, so the University, colleges, public schools, School-University Partnership and others can further their mission through this important state network which utilizes the private telephone network.

Contact . . . Wyoming Division of Telecommunications, 777-7111

A major advancement will also occur in 1994 in the area of **public broadcasting** when the coverage of Wyoming Public Television (KCWC) and KUWR-FM, Wyoming's only public radio station, is expanded. KCWC will finally be available in southeast Wyoming and KUWR in southwest Wyoming, increasing the number of Wyoming citizens who can take advantage of opportunities for telecourses and access to public interest programming that originates in Wyoming.

Contacts . . . Wyoming Public Television, 856-9291
KUWR-FM, 766-4240

Education professionals in a variety of subject areas are forming new statewide links with the private sector and national organizations to improve the quality of instruction in their field in Wyoming schools. These groups include the **Wyoming Geographic Alliance,** formed in conjunction with the National Geographic Society, to promote geography awareness among students; the **Law-Related Education Council,** which is working toward improving students' understanding of our judicial and legal system; and groups such as the **Council for Economic Education and Wyoming Business Week**, which work with educators to increase economic literacy for our young people.

Contacts . . . Wyoming Geographic Alliance, 766-3311
Law-Related Education Council, 632-9061
Council for Economic Education, 766-4926
Wyoming Business Week, 778-7065

RIGHT DIRECTION . . . WRONG DIRECTION . . . JUST OKAY?

There is a clear trend of improvement in the indicators used in Goal #3, indicating that the schools are responding to the challenge of the National Education Goals more rapidly then society as a whole.

While overall standardized test scores are not dramatically improving, we can be heartened that Wyoming students do outperform their peers nationally -- though that may be damning with faint praise.

What is more encouraging is that the number of Wyoming students taking Advanced Placement courses has nearly doubled in just two years, and that the number of students taking the recommended college preparatory curriculum in high school has increased by a third in three years.

If any one single factor can be given greater credit than another for this improvement it is the University of Wyoming's adoption of admission standards for resident students that are to be in effect for the class entering in the fall of 1995. As we said at the beginning, advise students what is expected of them and they will meet the challenge.

Most of the data presented in this part of the Progress Report focuses on college-bound students. The State Board of Education set performance measure standards for vocational education in 1992, and we need more data on how our students fare with those standards.

And let no student misunderstand: Those standards will be as rigorous as those set for college-bound students. A mechanic is not less intelligent than a teacher, nor is a contractor less skilled than a geologist. The skills required for each job are not less, only different. We need to get on with defining what those skill standards are, and we will discuss that more thoroughly under Goal #5.

GOAL 4 . . .

U.S. STUDENTS WILL BE FIRST IN THE WORLD IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT

Why do the National Goals focus on proficiency in mathematics and science over all other subjects? Because the world is in the throes of a technological revolution. No one -- as anyone who has tried to program his or her VCR can attest -- is free from the effects of this revolution.

Virtually every job from the cashier at a fast food restaurant to the designer of an automobile must have some level of computer skills, mathematics skills and a knowledge of the sciences. Virtually every problem and opportunity facing America today -- health care, protecting the environment, telecommunications -- will require technological skills.

That is the future of the job market, so it must be a key part of the present environment within our school instruction.

Objective 1: Math and science education will be strengthened throughout the system, especially in the early grades.

(1)[18] **Percentage of Wyoming 8th-grade students who do not have basic mathematics skills . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
27 percent	NA	29 percent	39 percent

Percentage of Wyoming 8th-grade students who were tested as having proficient or advanced skills in mathematics . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
26 percent	NA	24 percent	23 percent

Percentage of Wyoming 4th-grade students who do not have basic mathematics skills . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
30 percent	NA	NA	41 percent

Percentage of Wyoming 4th-grade students who were tested as having proficient or advanced skills in mathematics . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
19 percent	NA	NA	18 percent

Under the NAEP exam, basic skills mean that the student should show some understanding of mathematic concepts expected of that age group, while a student with proficient skills can apply those concepts to problem solving. At the fourth-grade level, for example, a question regarding a basic skill level might simply ask the student to measure the longest side of a rectangle with a ruler, while a question at the proficient level might ask the student to measure distances between several points, add the distances and then round the number off to the nearest whole number.

(2)[19]Percentage of all Wyoming secondary-school students (grades 9-12) enrolled in mathematics courses . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
76 percent	74 percent	NA	87 percent

Percentage of Wyoming secondary students enrolled in science courses . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
67 percent	60 percent	NA	75 percent

Objective 2: The number of teachers with a substantive background in mathematics and science will increase to 50 percent.

(1)[20]Percentage of certified secondary mathematics teachers in Wyoming who had mathematics as a college major . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
NA	31 percent	NA	NA

Objective 3: The number of U.S. undergraduate and graduate students, especially women and minorities, who complete degrees in mathematics, science and engineering will increase significantly.

(1)[21]Percentage of Wyoming secondary students taking advanced mathematics courses who are female . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
48 percent	48 percent	NA	46 percent

Numbers for overall participation by young women in science courses are incomplete, but 49 percent of those students enrolled in advanced chemistry courses are female and 56 percent of those students enrolled in advanced biology courses are female. However, less than a third of the students in physics courses are female. One reason may be a lack of role models. Some 80 percent of all physics teachers nationally are male, while just 55 percent of all mathematics teachers are male.

(2) [22]Percentage of Wyoming fourth-grade female students who were tested as having proficient or better mathematics skills . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
17 percent	NA	NA	16 percent

Percentage of Wyoming fourth-grade male students who were tested as having proficient or better mathematics skills . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
22 percent	NA	NA	19 percent

Percentage of Wyoming eighth-grade female students who were tested as having proficient or better mathematics skills . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
26 percent	20 percent	NA	23 percent

Percentage of Wyoming eighth-grade male students who were tested as having proficient or better mathematics skills . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
26 percent	27 percent	NA	24 percent

What Wyoming is doing . . .

Under the **Dwight D. Eisenhower Mathematics and Science Education Act,** Wyoming currently receives about $1.2 million each year for teacher training and retraining in math and science. More than 2,000 Wyoming teachers have participated in such programs as summer courses offered through the University and the college, extension courses offered through the Wyoming Institute for the Development of Teaching, local workshops and attendance at state, regional and national conferences in mathematics and science.

Two committees have worked for the past year to formulate outcomes or goal statements for use by the districts in the development of the global and course outcomes for mathematics and science. The **Science and Mathematics Outcomes Project** produced documents outlining suggested goals for the disciplines which have been endorsed by the State Board of Education. The project will continue to include the assessment of both science and mathematics outcomes.

Also continuing are such professional development organizations as **Project FutureScience,** the **Wyoming Mathematics Coalition,** the **Wyoming Council for Teachers of Mathematics and** the **Wyoming Science Teachers Association** -- the latter two of which offer programs on "Family Math" and "Family Science" which provide students with mathematics and science activities they can do at home with their parents.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Education, 777-6249

Right direction . . . wrong direction . . . just okay?

While we remain concerned about the overall performance of Wyoming students in mathematics and the sciences, there is encouraging news here, as well. More Wyoming students are taking mathematics and science courses, especially advanced courses, than in previous years.

The National Assessment of Edcuational Progress shows some improvement in overall mathematics skills, especially among female students -- a population that has not been well-served in the past.

The message that mathematics and science skills are needed and that these courses cannot be avoided seems to be sinking in.

Hopefully, we will one day be beyond the notion that people are either born with skills in these areas or they are not. It is interesting to again cite University of Michigan professor Dr. Harold Stevenson's study which found when American students were asked what is most important to understanding subject matter they responded "having a good teacher" – Asian students, who outperform American kids in mathematics and sciences, responded that student effort is the most important element in understanding a subject.

There is a large lesson for us in both answers.

GOAL 5 . . .

EVERY ADULT WILL BE LITERATE AND WILL POSSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO COMPETE IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY AND EXERCISE THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENSHIP

Not too long ago, literacy was defined as the ability to read and write one's own name. Today, literacy means many more things.

The basic federal definition now refers to the ability to compute and solve problems and to function in society. We also have new terms, such as "computer literate."

This goal, then, is far more ambitious than it may appear on initial review. This goal's aim is to ensure that Wyoming and America have a skilled work force able to accomodate the rapid changes in technology and economics

If Wyoming has learned one thing during the past decade of seeking to diversify our economy, it is that prospective employers place the greatest emphasis on having a readily-available skilled work force.

The implication of this goal is also that learning does not end at the 12th grade or even upon earning a Ph.D., but is a life-long activity that is essential if we are to remain productive citizens who can fully participate in the American dream.

Objective 1: Every major American business will be involved in strengthening the connection between education and work.

No indicators available.

This is quite obviously an important element in the improvement of our schools. If there is a flaw in this objective, it is the statement that every major business be involved. There is no reason why every business, regardless of size, should not be working with the schools in its area. Some of the most exciting business-education partnerships in Wyoming involve small businesses, but in every instance those partnerships prove mutually beneficial.

Objective 2: All workers have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills, from basic to highly technical, needed to adapt to emerging new technologies, work methods and markets through public and private educational, vocational, technical, workplace or other programs.

(1)[23]**Number of General Education Degree certificates issued in Wyoming . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
1,228	1,304	1,026	NA

Number of Wyoming high-school dropouts . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
1,642	1,406	1,240	NA

A survey conducted three-years ago estimated Wyoming's adult illiteracy rate at 7 percent, using the new federal definition for literacy. The federal government defines literacy as "an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in society and to achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential." "Function" is a broad term variously described as having the skills needed to access social services or enroll one's child in school.

While 7 percent was one of the nation's lowest illiteracy rates, it should be noted this figure represents 21,000 Wyoming adults.

That survey also estimated that some 47,000 Wyoming adult residents lack a high school diploma or equivalent and that nearly 16,000 adult residents have eight years or less of formal schooling. Figures indicate that a significant number of these individuals who did not attend high school are older, rural residents who attended school at a time when leaving after the eighth grade was not unusual.

Number of participants in Wyoming Adult Basic Education programs . . .

1993	1992	1991	1974
4,081	4,203	4,088[32]	1,390

Objective 3: The number of quality programs, including those at libraries, that are designed to serve more effectively the needs of the growing number of part-time and mid-career students will increase substantially.

(1)[24]**Number of volunteer literacy programs in Wyoming . . .**

1993	1992	1991	1986
29	30	NA	2

(2)[25]**Percentage of Wyoming community college students who are age 25 or older . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
60.2 percent	64 percent	NA	NA

Percentage of Wyoming community college students who are age 40 or older . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
23.3 percent	24 percent	NA	NA

(3)[26]**Percentage of total University of Wyoming students who are age 25 or older . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
39 percent	41 percent	NA	NA

Percentage of UW students at the Laramie campus who are age 25 or older . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
32 percent	32 percent	NA	NA

Objective 4: The proportion of those qualified students (especially minorities) who enter college, who complete at least two years and who complete their degree programs will increase substantially.

(1)[27] **Percentage of UW enrollment who are minority students . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
6 percent	6 percent	NA	NA

The overall retention rate at the University of Wyoming -- that is, the percentage of freshmen who return for a second year -- is 71 percent. The community college completion rate, which is the percentage of students earning an associate's degree as a percentage of total enrollment, is 12.8 percent.

Objective 5: The proportion of college graduates who demonstrate an advanced ability to think critically, communicate effectively and solve problems will increase substantially.

No indicators available.

What Wyoming is doing . . .

Wyoming's **Adult Basic Education** program serves more than 3,000 state residents. Wyoming spends some $800,000 annually on ABE -- two-thirds of that amount being federal funds. Wyoming's community colleges assume the primary responsibility for providing ABE courses. That commitment was reinforced this year in the Community College Commission budget which set aside a special budget line item for ABE to ensure the current level of effort is maintained.

Wyoming's ABE programs have several components, including an **intergenerational literacy** program that integrates parent and child literacy. Realizing that parents are their childrens' first teacher, these programs combine education for both parent and child at the same instructional site. This program is particularly beneficial for those parents who cannot attend traditional ABE programs because of problems securing childcare.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Education, 777-6228

The Wyoming Alliance for Literacy is a statewide coaltion of organizations and individuals interested in promoting the cause of adult literacy in Wyoming. The alliance consists of personnel from ABE centers, libraries, businesses, governmental personnel and citizens who are interested in furthering public awareness of literacy problems and solutions in the state. Wyoming's first-ever statewide conference on literacy was held last April, to increase public awareness about literacy issues and to inform Wyoming citizens about literacy efforts throughout the state.

Contact . . . Wyoming Alliance for Literacy, 268-2230

Wyoming, through a grant sought by the University, is one of only five states with a literacy program operated by **Volunteers in Service to America** (VISTA). The literacy VISTA mission is to assist with new literacy program implementation and expansion. Since its inception in May 1991, the VISTA literacy program in Wyoming now involves 13 sites around the state.

Contact . . . UW Division of Lifelong Learning, 766-6353

Wyoming Opportunities for Work (WOW) is now in full operation around the state, including full-service operations in 10 counties. WOW is part of Wyoming's overall effort at welfare reform, and under the program, welfare recipients are provided with educational counseling and services and can, in select instances, be required to go to school as a condition for receiving benefits.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Family Services, 777-7561

Public libraries are important providers of adult learning services. While each library is different, some are adult learning sites that tackle projects involving literacy both in reading and in using new information technologies. All are an important information resource for those who are continuing their education.

Contact . . . Wyoming State Library, 777-7281

Lifelong learning is a function of all Wyoming's institutions of higher learning. Enrollment of older students is increasing rapidly, and a variety of strategies are in place to reach out to adult students. On-campus, the University and the colleges provide adult learning centers to help older students arrive or return to college. Off-campus, the University and the colleges are using new distance learning technologies, such as compressed video, to reach citizens who, for various reasons, cannot travel to a campus for instruction.. Communities without a college are forming Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) to contract for a variety of higher education services.

The Post-Secondary Education Planning and Coordination Council, created by the 1991 Legislature, has developed a long-term plan for higher education in Wyoming that will encompasss such issues as access, governance and accountability in our higher education system. The PEPCC has been an important, but not the only, factor in making significant progress in areas such as transfer of credits and common course numbering.

Contacts . . .
UW Adult Student Center, 766-6189
Community College Commission, 777-7763

In addition to job-specific training, many Wyoming companies either provide literacy training or give employees the time to develop literacy skills. The **U.S. Department of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)** offers a framework for employers and employees to understand what is required to hold a decent job and earn a decent wage. At the state level, the **Job Training Partnership Act** offered remediation training to 233 youth and 269 adults last year. An innovative job training program in Wyoming is the **Alternative Transitional Center** in Gillette where those working to receive a high school diploma or equivalent are given employee training and work experience through a store operated at the Center. Students are rotated among the various jobs at the store which sells items manufactured or crafted by some of the students themselves.

Contacts . . .
Wyoming Department of Employment, 777-7672
U.S. Department of Labor SCANS, 1-800-788-SKILL

As an extension of some of the efforts listed above, Wyoming has received a $200,000 planning grant from the U.S. Department of

Labor, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education, to develop a comprehensive **School to Work** transition program. Wyoming has developed a team of representatives from relevant state agencies to begin the process of determining how best to serve students who are not on the college-bound track, but who will need a high level of skills to enter the workforce.

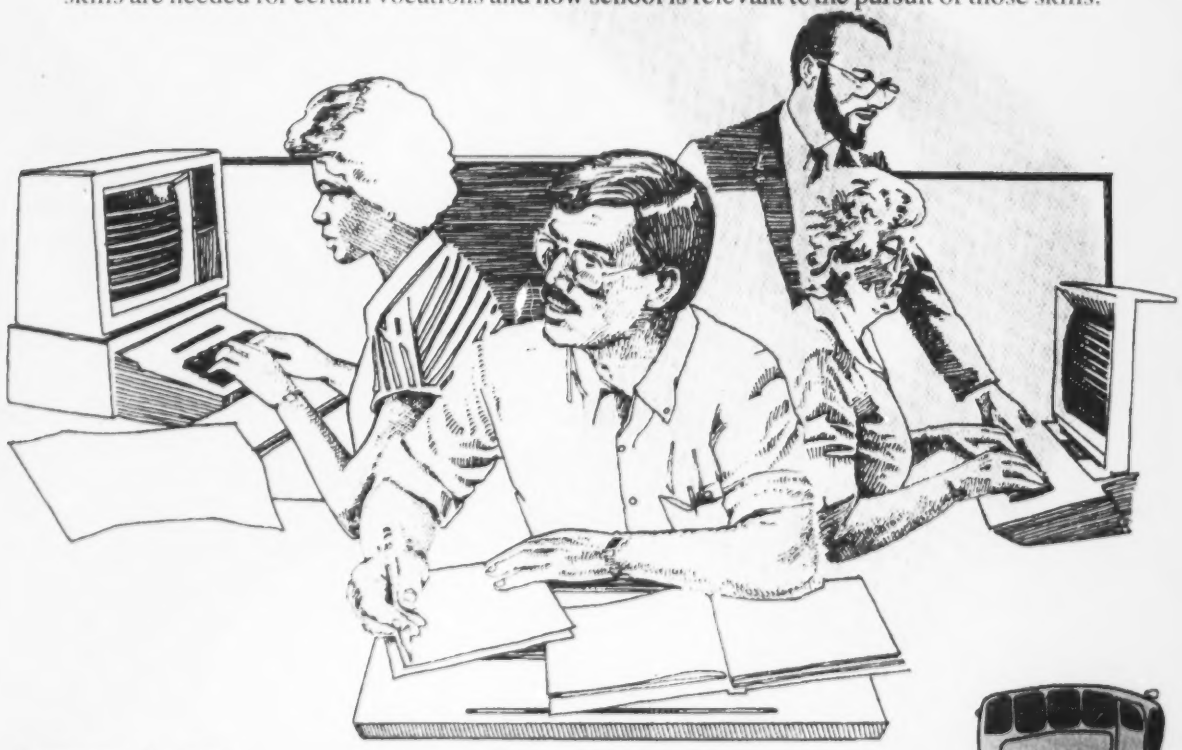
This effort will be one of the most significant joint projects between industry and schools ever undertaken in Wyoming. Different approaches could include the development of apprentice or intern programs, and the development of industry-by-industry skill standards. Thanks to the University of Wyoming admission standards, college-bound students now know what prerequisites are required for entry into college. So too, students seeking to enter directly into the work force should also know what knowledge and skills are required for those jobs.

Contact . . . Wyoming Department of Education, 777-7415

RIGHT DIRECTION . . . WRONG DIRECTION . . . JUST OKAY?

While the indicators are difficult to quantify, there is a clear sense that we are on the right track in addressing our literacy issues. Limited resources have not allowed Wyoming to reach all goals in terms of support for adult education -- i.e., child care and transportation -- but our literacy programs, operated primarily through our community colleges, provide quality services that are available to most who need them.

More importantly, while something that is difficult to put into numbers, there is a clear sense that business is becoming a more active partner in education at every level. While education is more than just a means to get a job, it is important that students understand what skills are needed for certain vocations and how school is relevant to the pursuit of those skills.



GOAL 6 . . .

EVERY SCHOOL WILL BE FREE OF DRUGS AND VIOLENCE AND WILL OFFER A DISCIPLINED ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING

No issue currently concerns Americans more than the issue of violence, particularly among our youth. We in Wyoming often like to believe that violence happens elsewhere, in urban areas far from here. That is not the case.

Wyoming residents see headlines that announce violent youth gangs are moving into our larger communities, a fatal shooting in a college parking lot, a gunman's random assault on a middle school soccer field and a brawl between traditional rivals that escalates with weapons and forces two schools to re- schedule athletic contests to daytime when it is safer.

Learning cannot occur when students fear for their safety. Learning requires discipline. We in Wyoming have an opportunity missed by California and New York, Chicago and Washington. We can get ahead of the curve and prevent much violent behavior before it happens. But that will require quick and resolute action. As you will see, the signs are there to warn us of the consequences of inaction.

Objective 1: Every school will implement a firm and fair policy on use, possession and distribution of drugs and alcohol.

No indicators available.

The Wyoming Legislature has ensured each Wyoming school is a "drug-free zone" where the sale of illicit drugs brings especially harsh penalties. The policy on drugs legally available to adults in society is more mixed. The sale of tobacco to minors is now a crime, for example, yet one-quarter of Wyoming school districts still lack tobacco-free policies. The policies that exist also vary widely in their scope.

Tobacco is a dangerous drug. In 1991, 648 Wyoming residents died prematurely from tobacco use. Like alcohol, tobacco is also a "gateway" drug that can lead to other drug use. Not every smoker will use marijuana or stronger illegal drugs, but it is true that some 90 percent of illicit drug users also use tobacco. Any war on drugs needs to begin on the frontline. We cannot wait to warn youth of the dangers of drug abuse only when they turn to drugs society has outlawed.

The following information was revealed by the comprehensive survey of Wyoming high school students conducted last spring . . .

- **45.9 percent of 12th-grade males and 32.6 percent of 12th-grade females reported having a drink of alcohol on at least three days in the month preceding the survey.**

- **46.2 percent of all 12th-grade students reported they had been drunk (having had 5 consecutive drinks) at least once in the month preceding the survey.**

- **7.6 percent of all students had at least one drink of alcohol on school property in the month preceding the survey.**

- **27.6 percent of all students surveyed reported they had tried marijuana with half of those saying they had use marijuana ten times or more.**

- **7.7 percent of all students reported they had tried cocaine, and 22 percent of all males and 15.7 percent of all females reported they had been offered, sold or given illegal drugs on school property during the preceding year.**

- **4.6 percent of all males reported using steroids without a doctor's prescription.**

Objective 2: Parents, businesses and community organizations will work together to ensure that schools are a safe haven for all children.

(1)[28]**Violent death[29] rate for Wyoming teenagers (per 100,000 youths) . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
77.6	88.2	NA	70.9

While the numbers are relatively small, it is worth noting that 4.9 percent of all fatalities among 15- to 24-year-olds in Wyoming in 1991 were due to homicide. Murder is the fourth leading cause of death in this age range in Wyoming.

(2)[30]**Number of incidents of domestic violence reported to police in Wyoming . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
3,275	3,305	2,621	NA

Number of juveniles[31] arrested in Wyoming (excluding traffic violations) . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
6,386	5,515	5,195	NA

Number of juveniles arrested in Wyoming for violent crimes[32] . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
51	48	71	NA

Number of juveniles arrested in Wyoming for burglary or theft . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
1,541	1,498	1,365	NA

Number of juveniles arrested in Wyoming for driving under the influence . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
81	73	75	NA

Number of juveniles arrested in Wyoming for all other alcohol-related offenses . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
1,297	1,199	1,274	NA

Number of juveniles arrested in Wyoming for drug offenses . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
73	69	44	NA

(3)[33]**Number of fatal traffic accidents involving alcohol where the driver involved was between the ages of 14 and 20 . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
7	5	12	NA

While drivers age 20 and under account for about 11 percent of all licensed drivers, they account for more than 15 percent of all drunk driving arrests indicating youth are more likely to drink and drive than older drivers.

(4)[34]**Number of suicides in Wyoming involving citizens age 19 or under . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
11	13	9	NA

Suicide rate for Wyoming youth (per 100,000 youth age 15-19) . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
26.3	35.6	23.0	13.1

A survey of Wyoming high-school students further revealed that10.5 percent of those surveyed said they had seriously attempted suicide in their life, and 31.4 percent of those who tried were serious enough in their attempt to end their life to cause injury, poisoning or overdose that require treatment by a doctor or nurse.

Number of persons in Wyoming below age 19 who were treated by mental health centers . . .

1993	1992	1991	National
3,993	4,050	NA	NA

Federal estimates conclude that some 18,000 Wyoming youth have clinically evident mental health problems, nearly 8,000 could be classified as seriously emotionally disturbed and 1,800 Wyoming adolescents meet the definition of being chemically dependent.

(5)[35]**Number of child-abuse complaints/substantiations in Wyoming . . .**

1993	1992	1991	National
3,272/1,496	3,260/1,493	3,141/1,440	NA

Other attitudes among our youth learned by the comprehensive survey of Wyoming high school students conducted last spring . . .

- **43.8 percent of all male high school students reported they had carried a weapon to school in the 30 days preceding the survey. Of those who carried a weapon, 44.5 percent said the weapon they brought to school was a gun.**

- **8.6 percent of all students surveyed said they had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the year preceding the survey.**

- **31.8 percent of all students surveyed had property stolen or damaged on school property in the year preceding the survey.**

- **3.6 percent of the students surveyed said they had skipped school at least once in the month preceding the survey because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school.**

- **47.7 percent of all males and 31.9 percent of all females were in a physical fight in the year preceding the survey. 60 percent of those in a fight said the altercation was with a friend or family member -- meaning 40 percent were not.**

- **22.7 percent of all males had been in a fight on school property in the year preceding the survey.**

Objective 3: Every school will develop a comprehensive K-12 drug and alcohol prevention education program. Drug and alcohol curriculum should be taught as an integral part of health education. In addition, community-based teams should be organized to provide students and teachers with needed support.

No indicators available.

A survey of Wyoming principals and teachers found that 80 percent of those principals surveyed, but just 63 percent of teachers surveyed, said their school offered a health education class. This would indicate disagreement even among educators as to what a health class is. Nor is there data on what that health class may cover. Those surveyed reported these classes ranged from 5 hours of coursework to 150 hours. It is also unclear how many -- if any at all -- offer a truly comprehensive program from kindergarten through high school graduation.

What Wyoming is doing . . .

The **Governor's Drug and Alcohol Policy Board** makes recommendations for state policy on drug and alcohol abuse prevention, and administers federally-funded grants which go to local community programs to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. Since its inception in 1987 the board has distributed nearly $2 million to local schools and communities for substance abuse prevention and education.

A number of exemplary **community- and school-based programs** are also in place across the state. Among these programs are **Drug Abuse Resistance Education** (D.A.R.E.) which provides primarily 5th- and 6th-grade students with the social skills needed to avoid becoming involved in drugs.

For older students, the **Teen Leadership Coalition** (TLC), developed here in Wyoming, trains teens with leadership abilities to get along with various social groups in school to let other teens know they share the same problems regardless of their social identity.

Target WY Project focuses on youths already involved in positive activities who are then trained to work in their schools and communities to target substance abuse.

The **I C.A.R.E. Hotline** is available to some 40,000 students throughout the state to give high school students an outlet to discuss personal problems anonymously with appropriately trained personnel.

The **Drug-Free School Zones** approved by the 1991 Legislature increases regularly proscribed penalties for drug dealing when that activity occurs near a public school. The intent is to both discourage drug dealers from congregating around our schools, and to let children know we care about their welfare and want to empower them to say no to drugs.

The Legislature also **banned the sale of tobacco to minors** to send the message that the use of tobacco by children is not acceptable. Surveys show the typical Wyoming youth who smokes began using tobacco at the age of 12. The penalty for selling tobacco to minors is a fine of not more than $50, while youth convicted of illegally purchasing tobacco are subject to fines or are ordered by the courts to perform community service.

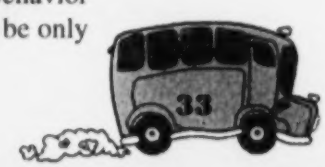
Contact . . . Governor's Drug and Alcohol Policy Board, 777-6793

Right direction . . . wrong direction . . . just okay?

Three-years ago, in our first **Wyoming Education Progress Report**, we expressed some of our strongest concerns in regard to our progress in meeting this goal. Unfortunately, drugs and violence remain major problems for our youth.

Substantiated instances of child abuse, reported incidents of domestic violence and arrests of juveniles for virtually all types of crime are up from previous years. These increases may, in part, be due to a heightened awareness of these problems, but one cannot help but sense that violence and fear of violence, particularly, seems to be on the rise.

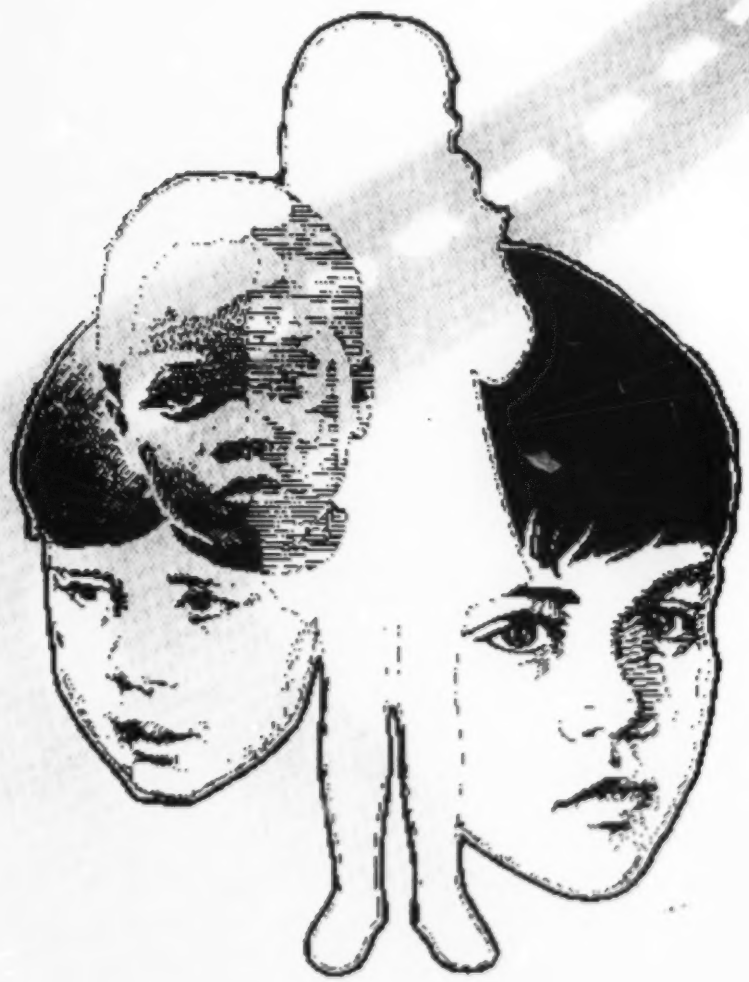
We noted earlier that surveys do not lend themselves to comparison as more objective data. However, in reviewing the 1991 Wyoming Youth Risk Behavior Survey and comparing it to the survey taken in 1993 there is reason to be only slightly encouraged ~ and reason to be greatly discouraged.



The survey questions are not identical between the two years, but we can extrapolate some trends from the data presented. The stronger illegal drugs, like cocaine, do seem to be falling from favor ~ though it has always involved a relatively small number of Wyoming youth.

Marijuana use, however, does seem to be mirroring national trends and increasing slightly. The drug of choice remains alcohol. Raising the drinking age does seem to have had some positive effect (note the decline in traffic fatalities, due to underage drinking drivers), but it remains a serious problem with nearly half of all high-school seniors reporting they were drunk at least once in just the month preceding the survey.

All in all, we are not clearly reversing the social problems of drug abuse and violence. This time we must say we are headed in the wrong direction and give ourselves a "thumbs down."



WYOMING EDUCATION GOALS . . .

The 1990 Wyoming Legislature established seven state goals for education . . .

Goal 1: Maintenance of a teacher-pupil ratio ranking among the top 10 percent nationally.

Goal 2: Establishment of a core curriculum developing basic learning and thinking skills and maintenance of a curriculum available to all students which encourages students to pursue traditional, technical or vocational post-secondary educational opportunities and trains them for employment in a highly technical and global economy.

Goal 3: Provisions for ensuring parental and community involvement in establishing and implementing goals for Wyoming public schools.

Goal 4: Maintenance of high standards and compensation for public school teachers.

Goal 5: Establishment of an accountability program which measures student progress, reports progress to individual school district residents and allows valid comparisons of progress between school districts within the state and between state public schools and schools nationally.

Goal 6: Establishment of programs addressing at-risk children and maintenance of a dropout rate ranking among the lowest 10 percent nationally.

Goal 7: Maintenance of teacher salary levels at among the top 10 percent in the nation.

The fact is that these goals, while certainly having some merit, are inadequate. They have failed to capture the attention of the public or state policy makers.

Little attention is paid to whether Wyoming is making progress toward these goals or not. In some instances, they lack relevance to the business of teaching students. Low pupil-teacher ratios may have great impact in lower grades, but in higher grades may be insignificant compared to many other factors. In other instances, they are simply not presented appropriately. Having dropout rate ranking among the lowest 10 percent nationally may be meaningless if the national dropout rate is unacceptably high.

It is time to re-think our Wyoming-specific goals, and to develop goals or objectives which will have the support of the public, parents, educators and policy makers. These goals should have relevance to what we have learned are the best teaching practices, and be goals which can be measured.

To that end, we offer the following suggestions . . .

We do not offer specific goals here. The development of those goals should be a process involving a wide variety of participants. We do suggest that new goals, complementary to the national goals, could be developed in the following areas:

Parental involvement . . .

A recent Newsweek-PTA poll found 40 percent of parents all across the country believe they do not devote enough time to their children's education. There is little doubt that nothing could so radically improve our children's education as much as the simple commitment by parents to read to or with their child just 15 to 30 minutes each day. Encouraging parents to read to their children is just one of many ways we need to connect families to schools, and schools to families.

Teachers and leaders . . .

Schools are flesh and blood, not brick and mortar. Our schools, then, are only as good as the teachers, principals, superintendents, support staff and school board members who support them. We need to continue to recruit those with an aptitude for the job, provide appropriate training and education and provide time throughout the year for professional development. Teachers, particularly, also need time throughout the day to adequately prepare for the day's lessons and duties. They need the right focus, well-defined missions and the opportunity to develop working relationships with peers across lines of responsibility. We need to develop ways to support our staff in these areas.

Time . . .

Eleven-years ago, the landmark report A Nation At Risk said America's schools need to devote "significantly more time" toward learning, saying, "This will require more effective use of the existing school day, a longer school day or a lengthened school year." Redefining the school day and school year is already a goal of the State Board of Education. When we compare test scores between American students and those overseas, one fact often overlooked is that many foreign students simply spend more time in school. Consider Germany, where students attend school an average of 210 days per year, compared to our 175 student days. Over 12 years, German students get essentially two more years of schooling than U.S. children. A high school senior in Germany, then, has spent as much time in school as an American student completing an associate's degree at a community college.

Space . . .

In Wyoming, the public school is the center of community life. It is the primary place for citizens to enjoy plays, concerts, athletic events, lectures, meeting space and continuing education. Yet, the school building is probably under-utilized. The more the community can be brought into the school, the greater the comfort of the community with the school and the greater its support for what is happening in the school.

Technology . . .

While not a panacea for education, access to appropriate technology will become increasingly important for a variety of reasons. First, knowledge of, and comfort with, technology will become increasingly important in the work place. Second, as schools move to more individualized study and instruction, technology can be an important tool in that effort -- for teachers as well as students. Finally, in a state where our small population is spread over a large area, interactive computer and video technology can be a link to instructors and libraries around the world and can make a community's isolation insignificant in terms of the education of its citizens.

Content . . .

We have said elsewhere in this report that students will rise or fall to the level of expectations set for them. We must have high expectations for all students, not just those identified as gifted or talented. At the heart of these expectations must be a set of rigorous standards and challenging, relevant course content to meet those standards. Just as the physical body becomes stronger with exercise, so, too, the mind grows when demands are placed upon it. America does a fine job of educating the top one-third of its students who are generally headed for college. The time has come to do the same job for the other two-thirds, especially those seeking to enter the work force or training programs other than college. One result of this approach would be an end to labeling students as smart, average or slow with different achievement goals for each group. It is true everyone learns at a different rate or a different way, but all should work toward the same goals.

A global view . . .

Mention the term "ethnic melting pot" and most of us think of places like New York City. Yet, historian Patricia Limerick has noted that Wyoming and the West are, in many ways, the most cosmopolitan region in the nation. The flags of Great Britain, France, Spain and Mexico have flown over Wyoming territory at one time or another. Asian- and African-Americans were some of our earliest settlers, mingling with our Native inhabitants. Today, Wyoming companies export products to two-dozen foreign countries. Yet, Wyoming students take less foreign language courses and, arguably, have less exposure to foreign cultures than peers in other states. We should not produce citizens with parochial views in a global society.

Business partnership . . .

In subtle and direct ways, schools follow the lead of business. For 50 years our schools mimicked the factory mentality of industry, moving students along in compact units, each teacher performing a certain task, all at the direction of management from the top. Today, business is changing. Decisions are made collectively with input from all levels. Collaboration and team work are replacing rigid structures. The ability to analyze and act are valued. Schools are changing, too. That change will occur more gracefully and more easily if there is a true partnership between education and business. Each should tap the other, regardless of the size of the school or business, for help and support.

Healthy choices . . .

We have also talked extensively in this report about how the health of our students affects their academic performance. We are not doing what we should be doing in regard to preventative health care in Wyoming. We need an effective counterbalance to the unhealthy images prevalent in popular culture. We need to build upon the voluntary K-12 comprehensive health curriculum and address the very real problems of teen pregnancy, violence, drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, sexually-transmitted and other preventable diseases that infect not only the body, but which poison the future of too many young people in Wyoming.

Many schools . . . one system . . .

Wyoming has a long, treasured history of local control that should be maintained. Access, individuality, innovation and a lack of bureaucracy are traditional Wyoming values. Yet, if our ambitious goals are to be achieved and our problems overcome, it will require a level of cooperation beyond anything done before, not only within the education community, pubilc, post-secondary and private, but also between education and health, social welfare, law enforcement and other entities whose charge is to help Wyoming citizens, young and old, enjoy a productive, healthy life.

Discipline and Safety . . .

Learning requires discipline. Students must be able to focus on the teacher and the task at hand. Disruptions in class penalize all the students in that class. Outside of the classroom, students should feel secure. The school yard should not be a place of fear, but a safe haven. The school yard should not be a place of fear, but a safe haven. The community must value its children and their safety. We in Wyoming are fortunate that the random violence that terrorizes the youth of our large cities is still unknown here, but we must be aware that some of these ills, like gangs, have begun to trickle into Wyoming and appropriate action must be taken.

WHAT YOU CAN DO . . .

This checklist provided in last year's report is as relevant today as it was then, and will remain so always . . .

Educate yourself about the issue . . .

Learn about education today. Start by visiting your neighborhood school. You will find it different than the school you attended. You will find the basics are not just the "3 Rs," but the basics needed by employers today are skills in how to think, how to work cooperatively and how to solve problems.

Become involved in education . . .

The strength of our education system will determine what kind of future we all enjoy. If you have a child in school, talk to their teachers and school officials. Find out how you can help. If the PTA is not active in your school, start a parent support group. Run for the school board. Lend your skills. The schools need you now more than ever.

Be your child's first teacher . . .

Care enough about your child to set a good example. Don't engage in risky behavior yourself and expect your child to abstain. Read to your child and read by yourself so your child knows that learning is for a lifetime. Take your child to museums, plays and concerts. Talk to them and listen to them. Share the knowledge you have to give them a head start at school. If you're unsure about what to do, contact your school, pediatrician or library. They can help.

Care for your child . . .

Start taking care of your child before it's born. Seek appropriate pre-natal care. Make sure your child is properly immunized and tested and that they have regular medical and dental checkups. Problems can be overcome more easily if they are detected early. An ounce of prevention is literally more valuable than pounds of cure. Ensure your child receives plenty of exercise and proper nutrition. Remember to set a good example yourself.

Love your child . . .

Good health and a sharp mind can still be for naught if a child lacks unconditional love and self-esteem. Expect the best from your child and they will respond. Expect the worse, and that's what you will get.

Expecting the best is what this report is about. We can be proud that generally our students outperform the national average on some standardized tests, but in some areas of behavior we do worse than the national average. Everywhere we must do better. Will you help see that we do?

Parental involvement

Teachers and leaders

Time

Space

Technology

Content

A global view

Business partnership

Healthy choices

Many schools . . . one system

REFERENCES . . .

[1]*Source: National Education Association, "Rankings of the States, 1993." Based on information provided by state departments of education.*

[2]*Source: "The Learning Gap" by Dr. Harold W. Stevenson,*

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[4]*Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.*

[5]*Source: The Annie Casey Foundation; "1993 Kids Count Data Book."*

[6]*Source: Educational Testing Service; "1992 National Assessment of Educational Progress."*

[7]*Source: Wyoming Department of Health.*

[8]*Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation; "1993 Kids Count Data Book."*

[9]*Note: The statistic for this 1993 report is the average of 1988-1992 data, while the statistic used in the 1992 report was the average of 1987-1991 data.*

[10]*Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, "1993 Kids Count Data Book."*

[11]*Source: Governor's Teen Pregnancy Task Force.*

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[18]*Source: Council of Chief State School Officers, "State Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education 1993."*

[19]*Ibid.*

[20]*Ibid.*

[21]*Source: Wyoming Alliance for Literacy.*

[22]*Source: National Center for Education Statistics, "NAEP 1992 Mathematics State Report for Wyoming."*

[23] *Source: Wyoming Department of Education.*

[24]*Ibid.*

[25]*Source: Wyoming Community College Commission.*

[26]*Source: University of Wyoming.*

[27]*Ibid.*

[28]*Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation, "1993 Kids Count Data Book."*

[29]*Violent death would include homicide, suicides and accidents including traffic fatalities.*

[30]*Source: Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation.*

[31]*Juvenile defined as a youth age 17 or under.*

[32]*Source: Wyoming Department of Family Services.*

[33]*Violent crimes are murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery and aggravated assault.*

[34]*Source: Wyoming Department of Transportation*

[35]*Source: Wyoming Department of Health.*

NOTES . . .

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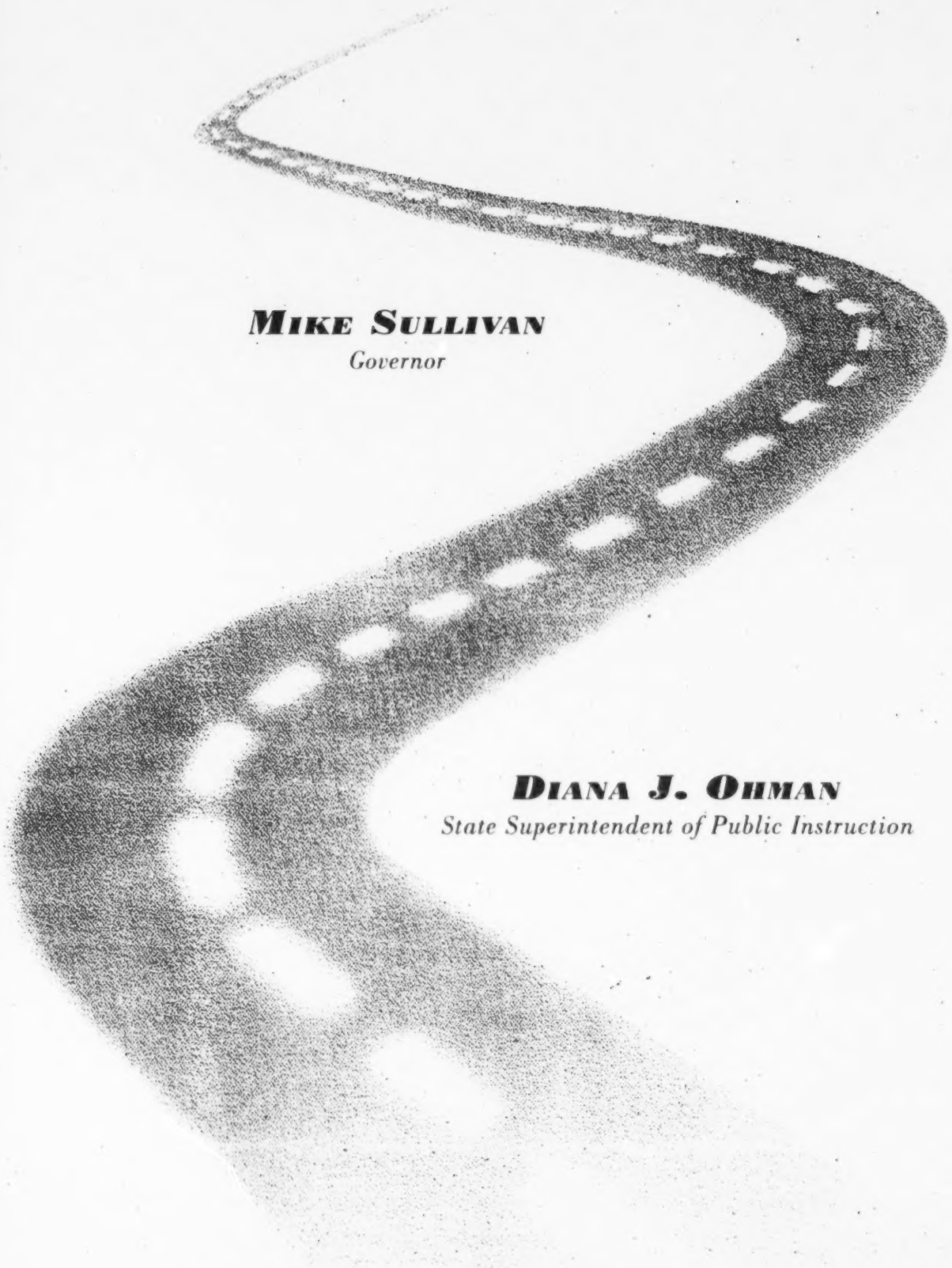

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